

teprising and even merry, and Elizabeth is all that a heroine acting the cheeky young boy should be. The dialogue is a trifle stilted and sometimes seems endless. [May 13]

SAXBY FOR GOD.

Richard Haley. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, \$6.95

Bob Saxby is an Englishman on the make. A successful executive and a respectable family man, he hopes to parlay his business connections, flair for stump speaking and overall charisma into a Parliament seat. The grand design goes smoothly enough until dark-haired Esther Moore joins his staff. As an aide, she plunges into grassroots canvassing; as a woman, she makes herself available to her candidate boss. Although Saxby suspects a trap, he cannot resist. A mixture of honest attraction and plain egotistical cheek keeps him from breaking off their relationship. The results are devastating, if predictable. In a bizarre rush of events, precipitated by his daughter's accidental death, Saxby loses his job, finds his marriage wrecked, and so sees his ambition thwarted. Haley's very British novel is somewhat 1950-ish in tone and surprisingly lean on sex. Still, it does have the ring of a behind-the-scenes exposé.

[May 14]

FUGITIVE.

Marion Montgomery. Harper & Row, \$8.95

This strong and beautiful novel of a country town in Georgia has all the richness of freshly turned earth, the sun warmth of the first real spring day. Walter Mason comes to Weaverton to set down roots. He has left the groves of academe and has made a pile writing country music. Weaverton welcomes him, but with some restraint. Acceptance will take time. Hugh Akers gives Walter an inkling of kinds of homely wisdom that are new to him. The Weaver family gives him facts and situations. There's more to settling in than the mechanics, however. Walt's weathering is as much the town's story as it is his own. A satisfying, deep, skillfully written novel that should receive critical attention.

[May 15]

LONGLEAF.

Rose Brock. Harper and Row, \$6.95

A good satisfying old-fashioned historical yarn that ought to have no trouble pleasing romance lovers. Bird Thatcher is the heroine, daughter of widow Lorna Thatcher and her slain Confederate officer husband. The Thatchers have lost everything: the plantation, Longleaf, and a way of life. Lorna, unlike many, determines to survive the Reconstruction. She does, supporting Bird through earnings from her little shop in Catalpa, Tennessee. Now, 18 years after the War, Lorna, on her death bed, reveals a stunning secret to Bird, one that sends Bird to New Orleans in search of her shattered iden-

tity. She finds another world, another self, and seemingly insoluble mysteries. The maze leads to an old abandoned New Orleans mansion, to a lost fleet of ships, a former slave, and ghosts real and imagined. The key to the Dutrones is the key to Bird's past and her rosier future.

[May 15]

JOY IN OUR CAUSE.

Carol Emshwiller. Harper & Row, \$6.95

This remarkable group of 20 short stories comes from a woman who is known as a science fiction writer. These stories, however, with the exception of one, are not science fiction. They are highly unusual, often brilliant and announce a new and exciting talent. What is unique about Carol Emshwiller is her ability to get inside women, to probe what it is to be a woman. Using deceptively casual interior monologues she says, in many of these tales, what women have felt, thought, pondered but rarely voiced. Her portraits of tentative, uneasy and often fragile emotions are striking, as are her perceptions about the stronger feelings of doubt, love or sometimes ambivalence women can have about husband or children. Women will recognize themselves here and know that this is really the way it is.

[May 22]

CIRCLES OF LOVE.

Roderick Thorpe. Putnam, \$7.95

Thorpe was a proven storyteller with his first novel, "The Detective." It is unfortunate, however, that his new novel about suburban life never quite becomes the slick thriller he apparently intended. For 100 pages things take off briskly enough as elements of a crime and courtroom scenario neatly fall into place. An unnerved rookie cop shoots a 17-year-old boy who may or may not be on drugs. Fearing an investigation, local police chief Norman Tascott covers up the circumstances of the death. In the meantime, a cub reporter, Peter Robinson, hounds witnesses, convinced the whole truth is not yet out. The plot develops this far and then, strangely, veers off track. Instead of escalating tension, group portraits of middle Americans intrude, bogging down the drama in unconnected, if professionally drawn personal histories. By the end of the novel, we know too much about strung-out teenagers and disillusioned marriages, not enough about why the community's repressed violence surfaces when it does.

[May 23]

SICK AND FULL OF BURNING.

Kelly Cherry. Viking Press, \$8.95

What critics find so lacking in much feminist literature—humor, satire, genuine pathos—this literate novel about a young woman consistently displays. Unattached Tennessee Settleworth finds 30 a very awkward age. On one hand, she wants to launch out into a masculine field, (she's studying to be a gynecologist and not a pediatrician.) On the other, she pines for

a husband despite the carping of the "sisters" in her lib group. Tennessee's dilemmas really get tough when she moves into a neurotic Park Avenue household. Within a couple of weeks, Lulu Carlisle and her teenage daughter Cammie entangle the med student in all their hang-ups and make plain she is their one psychological lifeline. The arrival of blond poet Adrien forces Tennessee into choosing between her own happiness and the survival of these two floundering souls. By avoiding a plot laced with a liberationist message, Kelly Cherry draws a convincing portrait of women coping in a world without men that other women will respond to.

[May 23]

WINTER KILLS.

Richard Condon. Dial, \$7.95

Condon's 11th novel is a political satire so powerful as to make most recent exercises in the genre seem frivolous. Tom Kegan (né Kiegelberg) is a professional Irishman who owns half of America and once spent millions getting his son Tim elected President. Tim, assassinated 14 years ago, is now found by his brother Nick to have been the victim not of a lone psychopath but of a conspiracy. Taking his life in his hands, Nick goes after the truth but gets drawn into a nightmare of violence, corruption and duplicity where he always seems one step behind some master mind or minds. Condon, shuttling rapidly between the assassination and the present, weaves a story that finally and with icy logic exposes the industrial-military-political-criminal clique that is running America, reaping cold cash from the American dream and using the latest in communications techniques to keep the people perpetually confused. For its suspense, psychology and bold admixture of the real and the speculative, the story is riveting; as a reflection of Watergate and actual political assassinations it is very disturbing. *Literary Guild alternate and scheduled for major publicity and advertising this spring.*

[May 29]

I, KRUPSKAYA: My Life with Lenin. *Jane Barnes Casey.* Houghton Mifflin, \$6.95

It's hard to decide whether this first novel is more unconvincing as history or as fiction. It certainly does a favor for neither. Ms. Barnes's idea is to see—or purport to see—Lenin through the eyes of Nadezhda Krupskaya, his wife. She meets him in St. Petersburg when he is 24, she 25 in 1894 and, for the rest of her life, we are told, "my feet dragged as I followed [him] into history." Whether or not her feet dragged, the novel certainly does, with an overabundance of political theorizing and philosophizing on the part of its characters which, while generally politically accurate, is fictionally enervating. We are given a thoroughly dehumanized Lenin, unfeeling, altogether unsympathetic, an ogre. They marry in exile, where she finds him transformed,